Key Documents of the Roman Catholic Church on the Role of the Laity

Year	Document	Pope	Key Points
1964	Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)	Paul VI	Defines laity’s dignity and mission; Ch. IV is dedicated to the laity.
1965	Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity)	Paul VI	Most important Vatican II decree specifically on lay apostolate.
1965	Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)	Paul VI	Role of laity in renewing culture, politics, and social life with Gospel values.
1975	Evangelii Nuntiandi (Paul VI – Apostolic Exhortation)	Paul VI	Highlights laity’s responsibility in evangelization and daily witness.
1981	Familiaris Consortio (John Paul II – Apostolic Exhortation)	John Paul II	Family as 'domestic church'; mission of lay parents in Christian education.
1988	Christifideles Laici (John Paul II – Apostolic Exhortation)	John Paul II	Comprehensive teaching on vocation and mission of laity in Church and world.

2001	Novo Millennio Ineunte (John Paul II – Apostolic Letter)	John Paul II	Call to holiness and participation in Church’s mission for the new millennium.
2013	Evangelii Gaudium (Pope Francis – Apostolic Exhortation)	Francis	Encourages missionary discipleship and lay evangelization in secular society.
2019	Christus Vivit (Pope Francis – Apostolic Exhortation)	Francis	Role of young laypeople in renewing the Church and evangelizing culture.
2022	Praedicate Evangelium (Pope Francis – Apostolic Constitution)	Francis	Reforms Roman Curia; opens governance roles to qualified lay men and women.